

## EDLD 5364:8035 Course/Project Reflection

This course, Teaching with Technology is one that I have been looking forward to since I registered for my first Lamar graduate course in the Masters of Educational Technology program.

Borrowing from my project reflection...

*The quote that resonates the most as I complete this project is from the McREL Technology Intervention report on school wide technology reform. In that report, Pitler stressed...*

*Training must have an instructional focus that guides teachers to think first about their curriculum and second about how to integrate the technology into that curriculum... technology needs to be considered as a means to accomplish curriculum goals and an instructional tool, not as the goal itself." (A-4).*

*This project showed me how to do that and in turn how to help teachers realize 21st century instructional goals using technology. In making this statement, I can honestly say the course, Teaching with Technology, expanded my knowledge of current learning theories and challenged me, through the development of the Technology Intervention Project, to apply Tech. Facilitator standards, IIA-C as our group collaboratively designed and created a learning environment for teachers as a framework for their development of technologically enhanced learning experiences for diverse learners. These same activities demonstrate mastery of Tech. Facilitator standards III.A-E.; the inclusion of assessment and evaluation strategies for students and teachers is a demonstration of the application of Standard IV. Finally, the sum total project site and its work logs demonstrate Tech. Facilitator Productivity and Professional Practice which is an application of Standard V.*

This course has deepened my knowledge of Web 2.0 Internet tool uses and in fact will help me more fully develop my Action Research Project in addition to helping me help my teachers better address the needs of their diverse classrooms. I now have a much better idea how to modify really good "flat" lessons with web 2.0 tools to support teachers in their efforts to move to learner-centered teaching practices. Thanks to the project and the course, I have a wealth of research based scenarios to share with my teachers. I also have the CAST UDL lesson builder site to with them to help them build better research based lessons that address the needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms of ever increasing size. I want them to know that according to many, many educational researchers, "Technology amplifies the resources teachers can offer their students,"(16).

I have created a detailed project reflection that should be considered as part of this course reflection. It is posted on my wiki at: <https://pastartz.wikispaces.com/file/view/5364projectreflection.pdf>

The collaborative process has taken its toll on me...it is very difficult to develop a complete high quality site when partners only manage a single 4 -5 hour stint in which they come and go for short periods. We attempted to use google doc voting tables for brain storming to compensate for this lack of joint planning time during the week. It was better than nothing, but I feel that closer scrutiny will reveal shortcomings that could only have been addressed with the commitment of more time for the process by individual team members. I instituted effort action plans to try to make members accountable for their actual contributions to the project. I am not sure it did any good, and I have to be honest, once I realized setting dates and times during the week was useless, it was very hard to justify continued non-stop devotion that was keeping me up until 2 and 3 am each morning the first 2 – 3 weeks. This will inevitably be an issue with almost any collaborative effort; I will need to do more study in developing effort documentation to ensure credit is commensurately awarded with overall effort on a given project.

I cannot end a course reflection without mentioning how awesome the Big Thinkers visions of the impact of web 2.0 tools and gaming on the future of education may be. I am trying to stay focused on the positive impact these tools will have on all students as teachers learn to use these tools to meet their individual learning needs. Sites like the CAST site exist to provide free tools to help teachers profile their classes in order to customize appropriate learning activities for each type of individual. The CAST site even provides an online lesson builder tool and template, also for the purpose of customizing instruction to meet the needs of diverse student profiles. Busy teachers need these tools every day and the fact they are free is **HUGE** because with class sizes increasing and budgets decreasing, they are likely the only kinds of resources teachers will have to help them meet the needs of their students. See the links below for access to these free resources.

In closing, I will say that one of my missions in embarking on my eJourney for my Master's in Educational Technology degree was to learn about web 2.0 tools and how to utilize them to enable teachers to better meet the learning needs of their diverse student populations. This course goes a long way towards enabling me to mark that goal accomplished.

#### Resources:

Pitler, H. (2005). *McRel technology initiative: The development of a technology intervention program final report* (Contract Number ED-01-CO-0006). Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED486685) Retrieved from [http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?\\_nfpb=true&\\_ERICExtSearch\\_SearchValue\\_0=ED486685&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_0=no&accno=ED486685](http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED486685&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED486685).

Startz, P (2012). 5364 Project Reflection retrieved from:  
<https://pastartz.wikispaces.com/file/view/5364projectreflection.pdf>

Center for Applied Special Technology, (2009). <http://www.cast.org/index.html>

Center for Applied Special Technology, (2009). *Model UDL Lessons*. <http://udlselfcheck.cast.org/>